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Summer 2004

### SPECIAL KIDS & COLLECTIBILITY ISSUE

This issue of Take Note has the latest buzz on what's hot with kid collectibles, plus some insights on collecting from our latest YTV 'SWAT' Kids Advisory Panel.

## KID RESEARCH

### KIDS, COLLECTING & PLAY

Kids have been collecting stuff for generations and it seems more popular than ever. So we decided to ask the YTV 'SWAT' Kids Advisory Panel just what makes something desirable to collect and here's what they had to say...

### AGE MATTERS

What makes something desirable to collect evolves as kids get older. While younger kids prefer to collect things that allow them to play with friends and to feel part of the group, older kids have the confidence to collect things that are more unique and that reflect their individual personalities.

**Regardless of why kids collect stuff there are common themes around what makes a collectible desirable.**

### I'LL HAVE MINE RARE

Whatever the collectible, it's more desirable to kids if it's harder to come by. The act of obtaining the rarity becomes a source of pride and can bring status within their peer group.

*"With Yu-Gi-Oh cards some have rarities and trying to get the rare ones - it's like gambling. Then, if you're lucky to get a rare one you can show your friends and they will be proud of you!"*

## GAMING / PLAY COMPONENT

Items that just sit on the shelf generally don't cut it with kids. The truly collectible items must have a play or game component (either playing with friends or alone). Collectibles generally come in sets with a variety of pieces or elements so that kids can trade them with friends. Some popular trading cards incorporate high-strategy game play.

*"I collect toy cars. If I get a double, I keep one in mint condition safe somewhere and I play with the rest. If I couldn't play with them, then it wouldn't be fun and I wouldn't collect them."*

## IT'S GOTTA HAVE PERSONALITY

A collectible is more desirable to kids if it is perceived to have a unique personality. The item itself can be based on a personality, for example: trading cards based on TV or movie characters, real life sports heroes or celebrities, or comic book characters. These clearly defined personalities allow kids to identify themselves or their aspirational selves with the characters, which adds to the play component.

*"When we play Bobble Heads, each of us plays a character. I'm Mini (Mouse)".*

## LOOKS COUNT

Unusual or unique visual treatments enhance the personality and play component of the collectible. Collectibles that incorporate design that's hot with kids (for example anime, manga, original artwork by well-known comic book artists, etc.) are incredibly popular, as kids are highly appreciative of the intricate detail

*"I collect mill coins. I collect them because of all the pictures. I like the design and how they're carved...There's a history story on each one. It's very cool."*


*Source: The information above was taken from the latest YTV 'SWAT' Kids Advisory Panel session held on April 27, 2004. The YTV SWAT Panel is made up of 12 girls and boys in grades 4, 5 and 6. The study conducted was qualitative in nature and results should be viewed as directional rather than conclusive.*

## KID TRENDS

### CARDS ARE KING!

The popularity of trading cards is certainly not new. What started out as a way to sell more gum in the '40s, has flourished into one of the world's leading collectible items. These days card collecting is bigger than ever with many reflecting the trends of the times (Lord of the Rings & American Idol, etc.) while others involve a game of sorts (Neopets, Pokemon, etc.).

While Pokemon brought the trading card game genre mainstream in 1996, it's **Yu-Gi-Oh!** wearing the crown these days as the card to collect. **Duel Masters**, another popular anime property, has recently come out with cards ready for battle as well as **Knights of the Zodiac**. Not surprisingly all three have shows on YTV that do extremely well. As a matter of fact,



throughout history popular television shows have always spawned "trading cards", but the difference is these days the most popular cards have a purpose, be it a battle or a points system attached.

On a related note, Yu-Gi-Oh!: The Movie is hitting the big screen this summer, so to further the hype, special Yu-Gi-Oh!: The Movie trading cards will be given out to the movie-goers. With Inu-yasha and Duel Masters stealing the attention of the Otaku (aka hardcore anime fan) away from Yu-Gi-Oh!, it'll be interesting to see if the full-length feature can put it back on top.

### Up and Coming

As mentioned in reports of the past, **Mighty Beanz** are a hot collectible with kids. Those plastic-shelled, bean-shaped characters (think Mexican jumping bean) hit it big over Christmas so it's no surprise that Spin Master is going where the gettin' is good these days - trading cards. The first series of **Mighty Beanz Genio Cards** will be released this spring. We're thinking that this new collectible card game will stimulate the same high level of interest from retailers and kids as the toy itself has.

### Super Cool

The streets will be safe once again as superheroes from the Marvel (Spider-Man, X-Men, etc.) and DC (Superman, Batman, etc.) comic empire join forces with Upper Deck to release a trading card game. Kids can assume the identities of their favorite super heroes and re-enact classic battles of good vs. evil as they wage head-to-head battles against each other. These cards will contain original artwork by many of the biggest names in the industry (rather than stock images) and incorporate high-strategy gameplay - which basically equals the perfect combination of collectability, playability and tradability. The set that we predict to be a big hit is the **Spider-Man vs. Doc Oc Marvel set** - out June 1st.

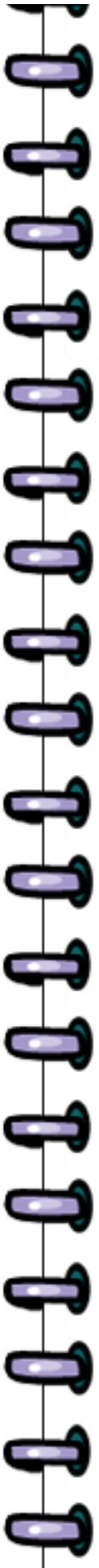
### For the Girls

**Star Sisterz** is a trading card game targeted to tween girls set to hit Canada by the end of '04. The game poses girls with dares and challenges (like singing out loud in the middle of the mall), building on girls' attraction to friendship, collecting and embarrassing mishaps. Players who complete their task are awarded a silver charm that can be added to a Star Sisterz charm bracelet. With all the boy-targeted card games out there, it'll be interesting to see if girls will be as receptive to this type of product. While the game concept sounds fun, we think it'll be the collectible charms that will peak girls' interest.

### **COLLECTIBLE MINIATURE GAMES**

Collectible miniature games are right up there with trading cards in popularity when it comes to the things kids clamor for. This past year games like "Mage Knight," "HeroClix," "MechWarrior" and "Battletech" were all hot sellers. **Here are some items that make our soon to be "it" list...**

WizKids has come out with a new game based on its popular HeroClix concept, called **MLB SportsClix**. The game features real Major League Baseball players like Alex Rodriguez, Randy Johnson and Barry Bonds in a two-inch-high 3-D game format. SportsClix players act as team managers, collecting and trading the miniature figures to face off on a ballpark playmat. The game simulates real life with actual player statistics contained in each figurine, giving figures



special powers at bat or at the pitcher's mound. Users decide starting lineups, where to play fielders and even what kinds of pitches to throw. We think this game is going hit a homerun with young sports fanatics.

**Navia Drapt**, from Bandai, mixes a fantasy story with elements of a standard chess game. Players earn "currency" by battling opponents to victory. Currency allows users to flip the dials and expose new powers and new movements. The figures are highly detailed and heavily influenced by anime style, a first for a collectible miniatures game. A summer release is planned, with initial starter packs released to build buzz. The anime element, its unique gameplay and breadth of original characters should make "Navia Drapt" a must-have for young collectors next holiday season.

### Classic Collectibles

Boys love to collect cars, namely, Hot Wheels. So it's rather apropos that Mattel would keep introducing new formats. One innovative idea off the assembly line is **Formula Fuelers**. They're cool race cars that run on common household liquids like soda, soy sauce or even water. Who knows, with the high price of gas these days Mattel could be on to something.

Comic book collecting is an age-old hobby, but these days more and more young people are getting into collecting **Manga** - a style of comic that traditionally uses black and white Japanese animation and is often the inspiration for animated TV shows (aka anime). Due to the popularity of these comics in the Western world, entertainment companies have introduced Mangas based on non-Japanese shows like SpongeBob SquarePants, Lizzie McGuire and The Fairly OddParents.

Almost everyone can remember the Beanie Babies craze of the '90s and remarkably they're still being collected by kids and fetching big bucks on eBay. The latest plush to take the world by storm is **Artist Collection: THE DOG**, by 4 Kids Entertainment. They're plush puppies based on photos shot at unique angles called 'strange ratio', making the heads awkwardly large (think Pound Puppies, but creepier). THE DOG has become a gift of friendship and affection making kids want to collect more and more. And the collectability is never ending as new breeds are "unleashed" every 90 days. To sum up this phenomenon: nothing says mainstream popularity better than becoming the treat of the week at North American McDonalds' as THE DOG did in April.

## NEWS FROM SALES & CO-MARKETING

### **I'LL HAVE A SIDE ORDER OF BRANDED CONTENT**

If you're looking for a way to enhance your current media buy and to positively increase brand attitudes and recognition - then branded content may be the perfect side dish for you.

#### Some Benefits of Branded Content:

- **Increases Positive Brand Attitudes** - is especially effective when placement occurs within well-liked / popular programs.

- **Increases Brand Recognition** -most effective when product placement is combined with traditional TV advertising.
- **Combats the challenges of commercial avoidance** technologies (i.e. VOD, DVRs, PVRs) and channel-surfing.
- **Positive Consumer Attitudes about Branded Content** - Almost half of surveyed consumers describe branded content as "entertaining"; while 35% of consumers say product integration is not pervasive enough, as it enhances 'reality' in programming.

### YTV Branded Content Opportunities

If you're considering sampling branded content and want to benefit from the positive association with the #1 kids network, then consider getting involved in one of these branded content opportunities:

**15/Love:** a great opportunity to get involved with a **scripted drama series** all about teens coming-of-age within the world renowned Cascadia Tennis Camp. These tennis star hopefuls are tanned, athletic, and gorgeous - think "Dawson's Creek" or "The OC" plays tennis!



**Spy Academy:** a reality game show with teams of kids completing tasks using the latest gizmos, gadgets and spy gear to become the ultimate spy master!

**Girlz TV:** a television magazine for tween / teen girls by girls. Think Teen People or In-Style Magazine but on TV and you've got it! Next season includes a 13 week host search event - a great concept for easy involvement.

**YTV offers numerous branded content opportunities!** So contact Mark Middlemore at [mark.middlemore@corusent.com](mailto:mark.middlemore@corusent.com) or visit [ytvmedia.com](http://ytvmedia.com) for more information.

### **SIZZLING SUMMER SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

**Go Cat Crazy:** From Monday, June 7 to Thursday, June 10 @ 6:30pm e/p, YTV pays tribute to that lazy, lasagna loving cat: **Garfield**. In advance of his first feature film release (in-theatres July 11), YTV will be airing one Garfield special every night.



**Spidey-Month:** The hottest show to hit the airwaves is crawling all over YTV in June with 2 back-to-back episodes of **Spider-man** every Friday night from 9-10pm e/p.

**Yvon's Big Knicker Snicker 2:** Celebrate **Canada Day** with that loveable, laughable wild man, **Yvon of the Yukon**, for the biggest party of the year! 4 back-to-back episodes on July 1st from 6-8pm e/p; including an all new musical episode!

So contact your YTV sales representative or visit [ytvmedia.com](http://ytvmedia.com) for more information on how to include this special programming in your media buy.

### **WEIRD ON WHEELS...NOT JUST FOR SUMMER ANYMORE!**

Weird on Wheels, YTV's high-energy road show will be entertaining kids and parents alike in malls across the country this fall. This is a great opportunity to connect with your target on-air, on-line and in person.

Plus, there are still tactical opportunities at premiere family events this summer including: the CNE, Calgary Stampede, Klondike Days, and PNE.

Contact **Sinatra Nathaniel** at (416) 530-5188 or visit [ytvmedia.com](http://ytvmedia.com) for opportunities to really reach kids and their families.

### **TREEHOUSE TV HAS SOMETHING TO CHEER ABOUT**

Treehouse TV has got great new programming slated for June.

We'll be adding one more airing of **Boohbah** which launched on Treehouse in April. This is a magical, exciting new show for 3-6 year olds, from the producer's of Teletubbies. The Boohbah's are five sparkling atoms of energy and fun that travel the world on a ribbon of rainbow light. Responding to the magical chants and laughter of children, they become energized and are powered into action.



Treehouse will also celebrate dad this **Fathers' Day** with **special father-themed episodes** of: Bob the Builder, Little Bear, Dora the Explorer and Angelina Ballerina .

On June 26th, let's say **Hello Summer!** Tune into **summer-themed episodes** of *Franklin*, *Strawberry Shortcake*, *Max & Ruby*, *Corduroy Bear* and *Berenstain Bear*: For more information, please contact Joanne Godel-Blatt at [jgodel@corusent.com](mailto:jgodel@corusent.com) or visit [www.coruskids.com](http://www.coruskids.com)

### **Tell Us How We're Doing**

Do you enjoy receiving the Take Note newsletter? Are you finding the information useful? We'd love to hear your suggestions on how to make this newsletter more useful to kid marketers.

[YTV Take Note Feedback](#)

## next newsletter

Watch out in August for the next issue of Take Note for more findings from YTV.



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